

EDUCATION – House vs. Senate – Key Differences

Monday, June 6th – Senate Education Listen and Learn – Room 116, Iowa State Capitol

10:00 – Opening Statements

10:00 am – Regents:

- BOR Member
 - David Miles, Regent
- A student perspective *15 minutes total time allotted*
 - Spencer Walrath- President Northern Iowa Student Government
 - Jared Knight- Vice President Student Body at Iowa State University
 - Elliot Higgins- President University of Iowa Student Government
 - Lyndsay Harshman- Past President of Council of Graduate and Professional Students
 - Michael Appel- Vice President Executive Council of Graduate and Professional

10:45 am – Community Colleges:

- Community College Presidents –
 - Barb Crittenden of Southwest Iowa CC
 - Rob Denson of DMACC

11:15/30 – 12:15 Lunch

12:30 – K-12 Education:

- Superintendent –
 - Tom Lane, Carlisle School District
- School Board member –
 - Dick Murphy, Des Moines School District
- Teachers –
 - Chris Bern - introduction to teacher
 - Scott Rieker- Music teacher from Meredith Middle School
- AEA's –
 - Brent Siegrist, AEA Director
 - Marlin Jeffers, Education consultant for the Sioux City AEAs
- AP Online -
 - Nicholas Colangelo, Professor and Director of Bell and Blank
- Students –
 - David Law – arts/music

1:45 - Early Childhood:

- Superintendent –
 - Randy Nichols, Eldora School District
- Preschool Business Owner –
 - Karen Ritter, Director of private preschool that coordinates with Eldora School
- Early Childhood Iowa System –
 - Chris Carman, Linn County Child Development Center

2:30 – Maintenance of Effort (MOE) lines at Department of Education and Voc-Rehab.

- Jason Glass, Director of Iowa Department of Education

Education "Listen and Learn" Presenters

Higher Education

Barb Crittenden, President Southwest Iowa Community College

Rob Denson, President of Des Moines Area Community College

Rob Denson was appointed the 4th President of Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) on November 1, 2003. He grew up on a farm near Homestead, Iowa, south of the Amana Colonies and graduated from high school in Marengo, Iowa. He is the first native born Iowan to be President of DMACC.

Rob has a B.S. in Political Science and Economics and a Masters Degree in Higher Education Administration from Iowa State University. He worked for Iowa State as an Assistant Dean for 3 years before moving to Florida where he served as an Assistant Dean of Students. He graduated from Law School at the University of Florida in 1979 and was an Associate University Attorney for 3 years before operating his own law practice for 16 years. He is a board certified civil trial lawyer. In 1996, he became Assistant to the President and Dean for Institutional Advancement at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville.

In 1998, Rob returned to Iowa as President of Northeast Iowa Community College in Calmar, Iowa where the College saw a 58% enrollment increase during his five year tenure. Rob believes in success, teams and positive thinking.

David Miles, Board of Regents

David Miles is the 16th president of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa. He was appointed to the Board for a six-year term beginning May 1, 2007, and elected president on December 5, 2007.

Mr. Miles has long been an advocate for higher education. Prior to his appointment to the Board of Regents, he served eleven years on the Drake University Board of Trustees, including three years as chair. On November 1, 2010, he was elected chair of the Council of Board Chairs of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

David received his J.D. from Harvard Law School, a Masters of Public Policy from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and his B.A. from Drake University. He is past chair of the Arthritis Foundation, Iowa Chapter, and the Leadership Iowa Board of Governors, and presently serves on the board of directors of Northwest Financial Corporation.

Regent Student Presenters

- Spencer Walrath- President Northern Iowa Student Government
- Jared Knight- Vice President Student Body at Iowa State University
- Elliot Higgins- President University of Iowa Student Government
- Lyndsay Harshman- Past President of Council of Graduate and Professional Students
- Michael Appel- Vice President Executive Council of Graduate and Professional

Education "Listen and Learn" Presenters

K-12 Education

Alex Schaffer

I have been in 4 musicals at the Des Moines Playhouse; High School Musical 2, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, and I am currently in Hairspray. I have been IHSSA (Iowa High School Speech Association) and participated in musical theatre, and group improv. In elementary school I participated in "Refelctions" and went to state in photography. I have been in show choir since eighth grade. I have had auditions for the ICarly show, a movie from the creators of the Blare Witch Project, and for a Pilot of a show that would have aired on CBS.

Chris Bern – President, Iowa State Education Association

Knoxville High School math teacher, Chris Bern, was reelected to a second term as president in April 2010. Chris has been an Association activist throughout his career both at the local and national levels. He served in nearly every leadership position in his local; and at the regional level, he served as president of both the Southwest and South Central UniServ units. Chris spent 11 years on the ISEA Resolutions and New Business Committee and served on the ISEA-PAC Central Committee. He was elected vice president of the ISEA in 2006 and, on the national level, was a member of the NEA Resolutions Committee and is a certified trainer for the NEA's program on school safety and anti-harassment issues.

Nicholas Colangelo, Professor and Director of Bell and Blank

Director, The Connie Belin & Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development--1988-present

Chair, Division of Counselor Education, 1983-1988

B.A. in Secondary Social Studies, State University of New York--Cortland, 1970

M.Ed. in Counseling and Guidance, University of Vermont, Burlington, 1973

Ph.D. in Counselor Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977

Marlin Jeffers, Education consultant for the Sioux City AEAs

Tom Lane, Superintendent Carlisle School District

David Law, Music Teacher

David Law is the 7-8th grade band director at Vernon Middle School in Marion, Iowa. He is a National Board Certified Teacher and a member of the Music Educator's National Conference, Iowa Music Educator's Conference (Middle School Chair), Iowa Bandmasters Association (currently serving as Past President), Northeast Iowa Bandmasters (Past President), Association for School Curriculum Development, National Education Association, Iowa State Education Association, and Marion Education Association (Treasurer). In 2004 he was selected as the Educator of the Year from Linn County. He is the founder and conductor of the Marion Community Bands.

David has had articles published in a national music education magazine, 14 state music education journals and was a presenter at the National Music Educators Conference in Washington D.C. He is an adjudicator, clinician and guest conductor throughout Iowa.

Education "Listen and Learn" Presenters

Dick Murphy, Des Moines School District School Board Member

Dick has been an educator and trainer in the Des Moines area for 30 years. He has worked with teachers, parents, students, and administrators in urban, suburban, rural, and parochial school districts allowing him a perspective that is receptive to various ideas and viewpoints.

His service in the Peace Corps inspired him to develop his specialties in language and cultural transitions and educational research and evaluation. He has authored books that have international distribution and he has served on national, state, and local boards, committees, and commissions. His focus now is acting locally while thinking globally. He and his wife Sachiko have two sons attending Hoover High School and a grandson attending Perkins Elementary School. Everyone in his family is at least bilingual.

Scott Rieker- Music Teacher from Meredith Middle School

Scott Rieker teaches vocal and general music for the Des Moines Public Schools. He spent five years teaching at Meredith Middle School and three years at Hoover High School. Under Scott's direction, his choirs were invited to sing at Iowa Governor Chet Culver's Inauguration, the Iowa Education Association's 2009 Read Across America celebration, and the annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration for the Des Moines Public Schools. Scott specializes in teaching choral voice in the style of Richard Miller, creating beautiful musical sound through correct vocal technique. He is looking forward to the challenge of teaching in his new position in K-5 music at Pleasant Hill and Phillips Elementary Schools in Des Moines.

Brent Siegrist, AEA Director

Brent Siegrist is currently the Executive Director for the Iowa Area Education Agencies. He has served in that position since 2003. Prior to that, Siegrist served 18 years in the Iowa House of Representatives representing Council Bluffs, Iowa. During those years, Siegrist's focus was on education in Iowa and he served on both the House Standing Education Committee as well as the Joint Education Appropriations Subcommittee. Siegrist spent four years as an assistant House Minority Leader and then spent his last 10 years in the Iowa House in leadership positions. He spent seven years as the House Majority Leader and then three years as Speaker of the House. Siegrist retired from the Iowa House in 2002 when he took his current position with the AEA system.

Siegrist taught high school social studies for 18 years prior to and during his time in the Legislature. He also served as an adjunct professor at the Buena Vista University campus in Council Bluffs for two years. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Iowa Western Community College; Board of Directors at Iowa Public Television; Board of Directors for Goodwill of Omaha/Council Bluffs; Foundation Board for St. Albert Catholic Schools; Iowa Commissioner for the Midwest Higher Education Compact.

Early Childhood

Chris Carman, Linn County Child Development Center

Chris Carman has served in the field of early childhood education for 37 years. He currently serves as Director of Linn County Child Development Center. From 1984-1999, Chris worked at

Education "Listen and Learn" Presenters

HACAP in various administrative positions where he helped to develop many programs that improve the lives of children and families in Linn County. In 2004, the Chris Carman Award was created by HACAP Child Care Resource and Referral in appreciation of his significant contributions. Since 2005, this award is given annually to recognize someone who walks in his footsteps.

At the state level, Chris served on the Iowa Learns Council and on the Empowerment Board. He meets regularly with state and local legislators to advocate for funding and high quality education and services in our field. He has also served as Finance Chair and Chapter Representative for Iowa AEYC.

Randy Nichols, Superintendent Eldora School District

Bio highlights: 34 years as an educator in Iowa, 21 years as a school administrator

Karen Ritter, Director Good Shepherd Preschool

Collaborating with ENPCSD for the 4-Year-Old Voluntary Program

Bio highlights: I have taught at Good Shepherd for 26 years. I have an elementary teaching degree and received my early childhood endorsement in 2009.

I feel that the 4-Year-Old Voluntary Program has enabled a good program at Good Shepherd Preschool to become an excellent program. Because of the rigorous requirements that are needed to meet the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, we have increased the quality and quantity of time that preschoolers spend at Good Shepherd. Before the grant we had 4 year-olds for 7.5 hours per week. Now we have them for 12 hours a week.

Maintenance of Effort – State Budgets

Jason Glass, Director of Iowa Department of Education

Jason Glass was senior director for human capital strategy at Battelle for Kids, where he provided policy leadership and technical consulting to state departments of education and school districts in implementing comprehensive human capital strategies, including strategic compensation systems, evaluation systems and the use of multiple measures to improve teaching effectiveness and student learning.

His previous experience includes the director of human resources for Eagle County Schools, where he was director of all human resource functions for the more than 900 district employees. He also spent a number of years working within the Colorado Department of Education. He holds a B.A. in Political Science, and a Master's in both Education and Political Science, all from the University of Kentucky. He is scheduled to receive his doctorate in education from Seton Hall University in March of this year.

David Mitchell, Administrator, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Thirty years of experience in assisting Iowans with disabilities obtain competitive employment, in non-profit, private sector and public sector employment.

Senate Education Appropriations Subcommittee

Hearing of June 6, 2011

Remarks by David W. Miles, President

Board of Regents, State of Iowa

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Fiscal 2012 appropriations decisions currently under consideration and the potential impact of those decisions on the Regent institutions. The Board staff has prepared handouts that I will refer to in my presentation.

We approach this discussion from the perspective that the future of Iowa is inextricably linked to education. If we want to grow Iowa's population, create good-paying knowledge-economy jobs, increase family incomes, and improve the quality of life in our state, then we need a sound educational system, from the earliest days of a child's life, and throughout our lives.

A person who earns a bachelor's degree can expect to earn almost \$1 million *more* than someone with a high school degree in the course of a lifetime. College graduates generate far more tax revenue to support needed government services, are healthier, less likely to be unemployed, and less dependent on public resources. They also foster higher levels of educational attainment in their children, and are more likely to volunteer, vote, and make charitable contributions.

However true this has been in the past, it will be even more so going forward. Slide 2 describes an analysis conducted by Georgetown University which shows that fully 60 percent of jobs in the U.S will require postsecondary education by 2018. Today, only 39% of working age Iowans hold at least a two-year degree,

and only 28% a bachelor's degree or higher. According to a September 2010 report from the Lumina Foundation, between now and 2018, Iowa will need to fill 527,000 vacancies resulting from job creation, worker retirements and other factors. Of these job vacancies, 319,000 will require postsecondary credentials.

The stakes are high and getting higher. As the Lumina report states, "the Great Recession is putting the relationship between higher education and the economy into stark relief. Today, while overall unemployment rates are hovering around 10 percent, only 4.5 percent of college graduates are unemployed.

"[E]mployers are paying an increasing premium for college graduates. This same phenomenon is occurring in 29 of the 30 most developed countries.... Meanwhile, the well-paying, low-skill jobs that American industry used to provide in abundance are disappearing quickly."

For more and more students – including 70% of 2010 high school graduates – a college education is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. That is why we believe that for Iowa to have a more prosperous future there is no better place for the state, or individual students and their families to invest than in education.

Iowa is blessed with a higher education system that is the envy of other states across the country. Along with our outstanding independent colleges and universities, and a vibrant and growing network of community colleges, the crown jewels of that system are three of the best and most affordable public universities in the nation – the University of Northern Iowa, Iowa State University and the University of Iowa.

One measure of the success of Iowa's Public Universities is our ability to attract increasing numbers of students. That students from Iowa, across the nation

and around the world choose to attend our public universities is a testament to their quality and value.

While educating students is the most important contribution the Regent institutions make to our state, our three-fold mission of education, research and service yields an extraordinary return on investment for Iowans. As slide 3 shows, Iowa's Public Universities contribute between \$8 and \$9 billion annually – year in and year out – to Iowa's economy, including \$896 million through externally funded research, and \$335 million in tuition revenue from out-of-state students.

A recent study by Tripp Umbach done for the University of Iowa reported that

- Each \$1 invested in the University returns \$15.81 to the state of Iowa
- For every \$1 in state funding appropriated to the University, \$1.28 in tax revenue is returned to state and local governments

So, even looking at this from the perspective of near-term net cash flows to the State, investing in Iowa's Public Universities is a win-win.

Our focus today is FY 2012 appropriations. But we cannot view the current year in isolation. Despite Iowa's commitment to education historically, in recent years the State of Iowa has been reducing its investment in public higher education in our state, and the fiscal pressures on our universities have mounted significantly.

Slide 4 reminds us that as recently as the 1990s, the state of Iowa paid 77 cents for every dollar of the cost of educating our young people. Today Iowa is investing only 40 cents of every dollar needed to educate our students.

This dramatically changes the longstanding compact between our state and

its people by shifting the cost burden to students and their families, thus threatening our ability to deliver on our promise of keeping higher education affordable.

Slide 5 shows that the Regent institutions have borne a disproportionately large share of state budget cuts. Since 2001, while state appropriations (excluding the Board of Regents) rose 28%, appropriations to the Regents enterprise were actually cut 24%. This pattern of multi-year disinvestment is more than shared sacrifice during difficult times. It reflects judgments that place a lower value on funding public higher education than other priorities.

As a result, even prior to the global financial crisis, our universities were already doing more with less.

While the state has been disinvesting in public higher education for some time, slide 6 makes the point that the last three years have been far more challenging. In the current fiscal year state appropriations to fund general education at Iowa's Public Universities in FY11 are \$118 million less, or 20% lower, than they were just three years prior.

Think about that for a moment. In the last three years alone state cuts have reached the equivalent of completing eliminating the University of Northern Iowa, not just once, but one and a half times.

In nominal dollars the cuts that have already been visited upon Iowa's Public Universities have turned back the clock to 1997. In real dollar terms our current funding equals levels of 30 years ago. This despite much larger enrollments today.

And, as slide 7 reflects, Fiscal 2010 cuts to public higher education in Iowa were disproportionately large compared to the rest of the nation.

We come to you today with nothing but the utmost respect for each and every one of the elected officials charged with making critical decisions about how best to manage our state's finances. We know that all involved are working constructively toward the right outcome for all Iowans.

Our perspective is straightforward: It is vital that we put a stable floor under state funding of the Regent institutions.

And this brings us to slide 8.

The House Omnibus Bill asks the Regent institutions to absorb another \$41 million in budget cuts on top of the \$118 million already incurred over the last 3 years.

Said differently, funding for Iowa's Public Universities would be rolled back yet another year – to 1996 – despite the fact that enrollment at our institutions has grown the equivalent of an entire university in those 16 years.

These cuts are particularly hard on UNI. In contrast to the University of Iowa and Iowa State University, UNI's major source of general fund revenue is from state appropriations (50% compared to about 38% at the other two universities). When state budgets are cut, UNI suffers to a greater extent. The effect is further compounded in tuition revenues. UNI is proud to serve Iowa students – having a student body where 93% of undergraduates and 80% of graduate are Iowans. However, their dependence upon resident enrollment leaves them much more vulnerable to cuts in state appropriations.

If the House Omnibus Bill is adopted in its current form, UNI will face a deficit for FY 2012 of approximately \$6 million.

The Iowa Braille & Sight Saving School and Statewide System for Vision Services is in the midst of major changes to how services to blind and sight-impaired children in our State are delivered. As is described in greater detail on slide 9, year-over-year cuts of 30% threaten to derail those efforts.

We are deeply concerned about the impact of this budget on the Iowa School for the Deaf. Unlike our public universities, ISD is almost entirely dependent upon state funding to fulfill its mission. As slide 10 describes, a further 10% cut in funding will necessitate additional staff reductions – reductions so severe as to raise doubts about ISD's ability to provide the education deaf and hearing-impaired children and their parents expect from this state.

While the universities have done an outstanding job of managing through these difficult times, the cumulative magnitude of state budget cuts over the last 3 years, combined with additional cuts proposed in the House Omnibus Bill, will make it impossible to hold students harmless. We have a number of student leaders here this morning to address the impact on students of further reductions. Before turning the presentation over to them, on slide 11 we note some of those potential impacts, including:

- Reversing gains made over the past three years in student retention and graduation rates
- Larger class sizes and reduced course offerings
- Fewer support staff, such as advisers and counselors
- More crowded laboratories
- Less direct faculty contact

- The loss of top faculty to other states and universities
- Reduced service hours in buildings and libraries
- Elimination of positions, including teaching assistant jobs

The Board of Regents has warned for some time now that public higher education in Iowa can only do more with less for so long before quality, access and affordability are all compromised – perhaps beyond repair. Whether we have reached that point may not be known with certainty for many years. But surely it must be apparent that we are dangerously close.

Investment in Iowa's Public Universities and Special Schools, at stable and predictable levels, is necessary to provide quality, affordable education to the citizens of our state.

Thank you.



BOARD OF
REGENTS
STATE OF IOWA

FUNDING THE FUTURE: STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR IOWA'S REGENT INSTITUTIONS

Fiscal 2012

Iowa Facts

- ❑ Analysis conducted by Georgetown University shows that fully 60 percent of jobs in the U.S. will require postsecondary education by 2018.
- ❑ Today, only 39% of working age Iowans hold at least a two-year degree, and only 28% hold a bachelor's degree or higher.
- ❑ September 2010 report from the Lumina Foundation concludes that Iowa will need to fill 319,000 jobs requiring postsecondary credentials by 2018.
- ❑ Nationally, 70% of the 2010 high school graduates started college, the highest percentage on record.

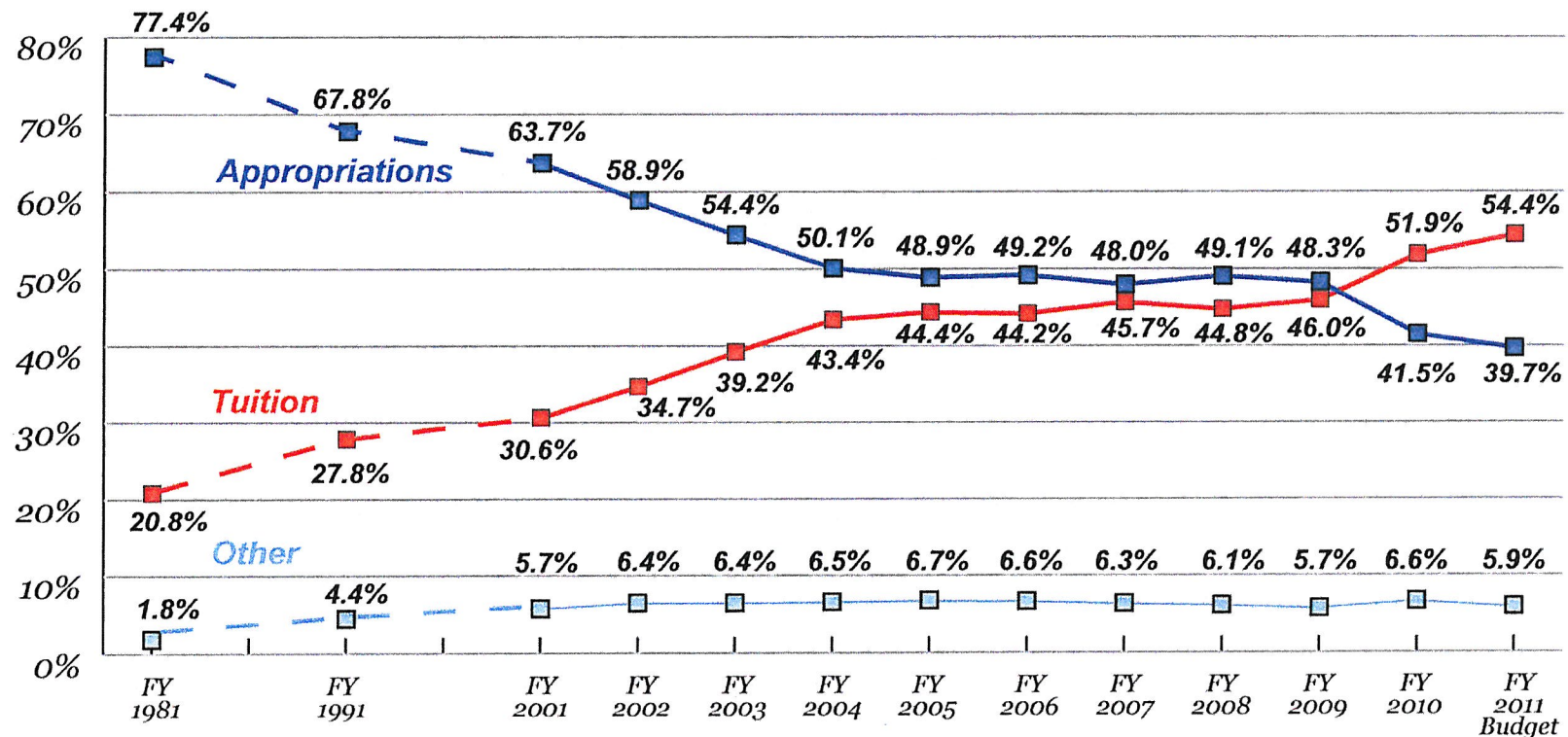
Impact of Iowa's Public Universities

3

- ❑ Iowa's public universities contribute between \$8–\$9 billion annually to Iowa's economy
- ❑ Through external funding, they contributed \$896 million to Iowa's economy in FY 2010
- ❑ \$335 million entered the state of Iowa in the form of tuition from out-of-state students in FY 2011
- ❑ 228,400 public university alumni live in Iowa
- ❑ The Regent Enterprise has a \$4 billion budget, 17% funded by State dollars

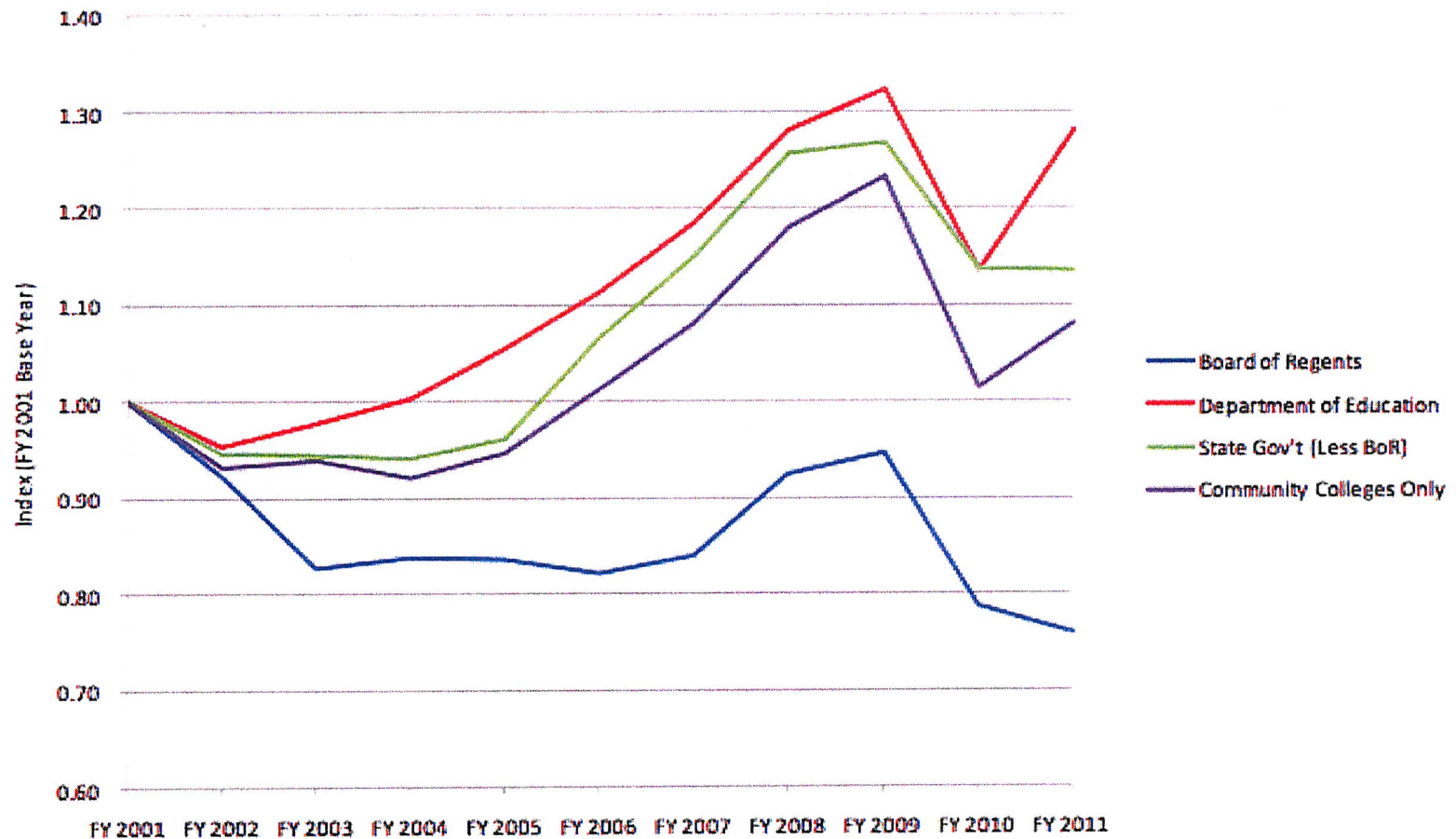
Comparison of Funding Source Per FTE Student

4



Comparative State General Fund Appropriations

5



Source: LSA's Gray Book

Perspective on State Appropriations

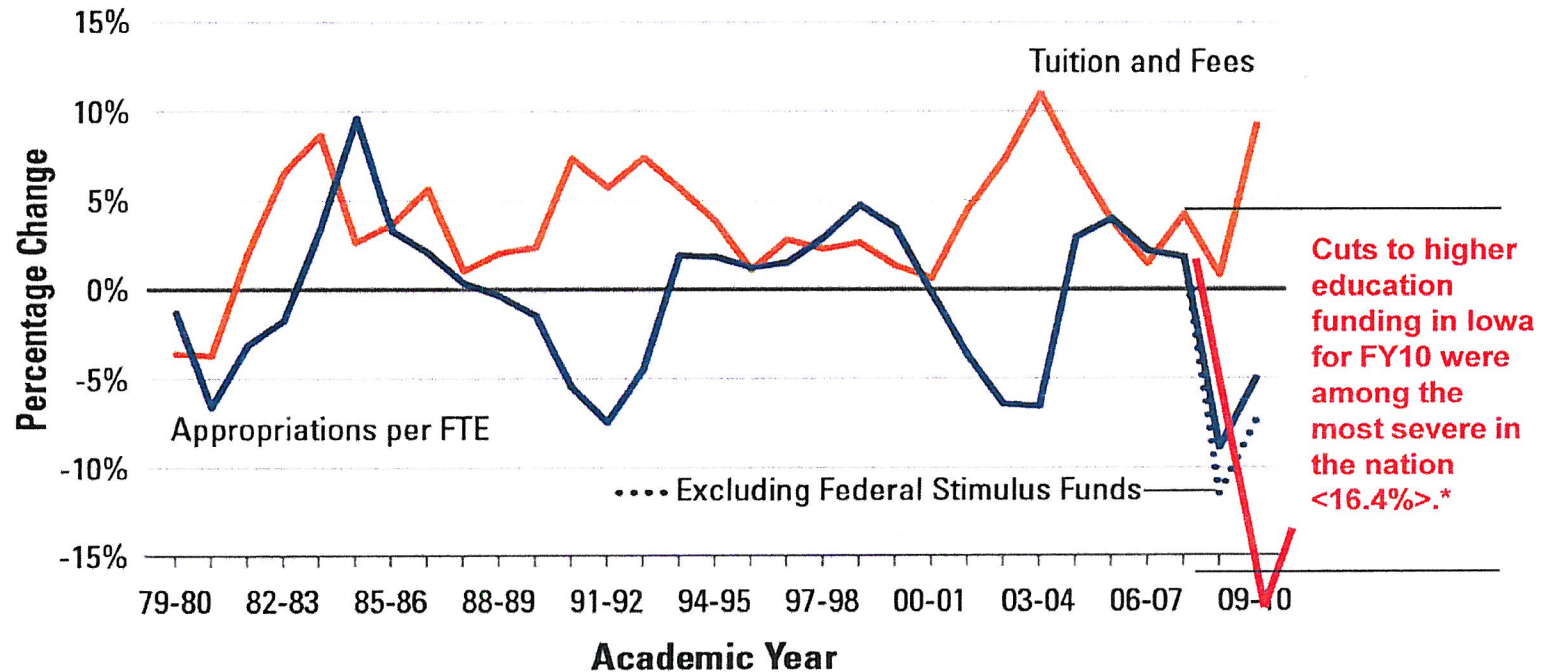
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- ❑ Appropriation cuts since FY 2009 for general education total \$118 million – the equivalent of defunding UNI 1.5 times
 - ❑ (adding cuts for economic development and other services brings the total to \$143.5 million)
- ❑ Iowa's Public Universities have absorbed 20 percent in cuts the last three years.
- ❑ FY 2011 funding rolled back to 1997 levels; in real dollars, our appropriation is the same as it was 30 years ago, despite steady enrollment growth.
- ❑ Cuts to Iowa's Public Universities last year were among the most severe in the nation.

FY 2010 Cuts to Iowa's Higher Education Worse than National Trend

7

Annual Percentage Changes in State Appropriations for Higher Education per Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Student and in Tuition and Fees at Public Four-Year Institutions in Constant 2009 Dollars, 1979-80 to 2009-10



SOURCE: The College Board, *Trends in College Pricing 2010*, Figure 10A.

* The initial FY10 of <21.1%> ranked Iowa 50th in the nation; after the Supplemental appropriation our rank improved to 45th.

Impact of House Omnibus Bill

8

- ❑ General education funds cut an additional \$41 million
- ❑ Iowa's public universities rolled back 17 years to funding at FY 1996 levels
- ❑ At the same time, FTE enrollment has grown 11,402 since FY 1996 - Equivalent of UNI's total enrollment
- ❑ UNI disproportionately affected
- ❑ Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School cut 30%
- ❑ Iowa School for the Deaf cut 10%

Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

9

- ❑ Reduction in work force of 35 employees with expertise in the education and care of students who are blind or visually impaired representing 32% of the workforce.
- ❑ Financial and personnel shortage threatening the ability to implement the recommendations of the Board of Regents study committee on residential services aimed at increasing the intensity of services to students who are blind or visually impaired statewide to reduce or eliminate the need for costly residential placements.
- ❑ Financial and personnel shortage leading to cuts in regional learning programs and summer services for students who are blind or visually impaired as required for learning in areas of the expanded core curriculum.

Iowa School for the Deaf

10

- ❑ Cut 18 positions; 16 of which are direct student service providers
- ❑ Eliminate Summer Program
- ❑ Eliminate postsecondary “4PLUS” program for ages 18-21
- ❑ Eliminate Work-based Learning opportunities for ISD seniors
- ❑ Eliminate weekly transit of students for home visits
- ❑ Eliminate repairs and maintenance of facilities

Omnibus Bill Affects Students

11

- ❑ Reversing gains made over the past three years in student retention and graduation rates
- ❑ Larger class sizes and reduced course offerings
- ❑ Fewer support staff, such as advisers and counselors
- ❑ More crowded laboratories
- ❑ Less direct faculty contact
- ❑ The potential loss of top faculty to other states and universities
- ❑ Reduced service hours in buildings and libraries
- ❑ Elimination of positions, including teaching assistant jobs

Community Colleges of Iowa

Handouts for presentation by:

Barb Crittenden

Southwestern Community College
President

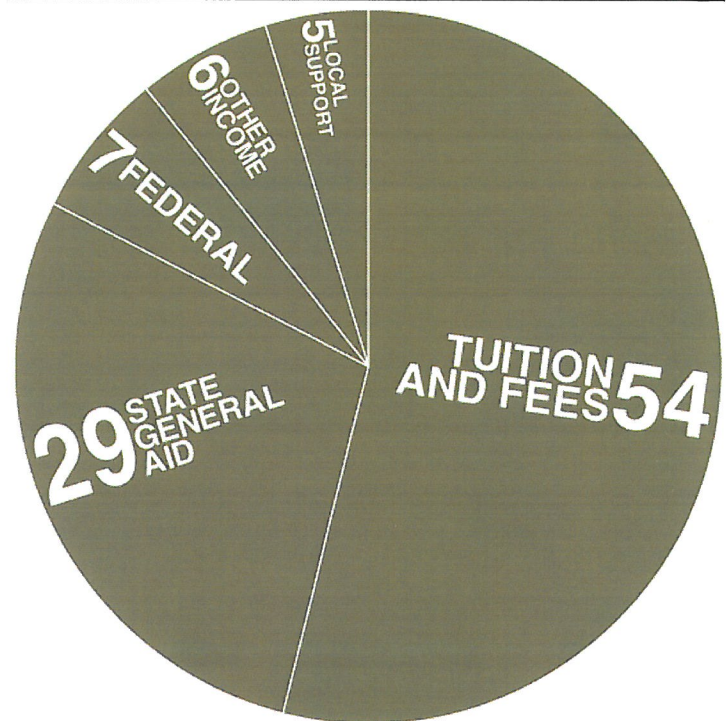
Rob Denson

Des Moines Area Community College
President

**Senate Education
Subcommittee Meeting**

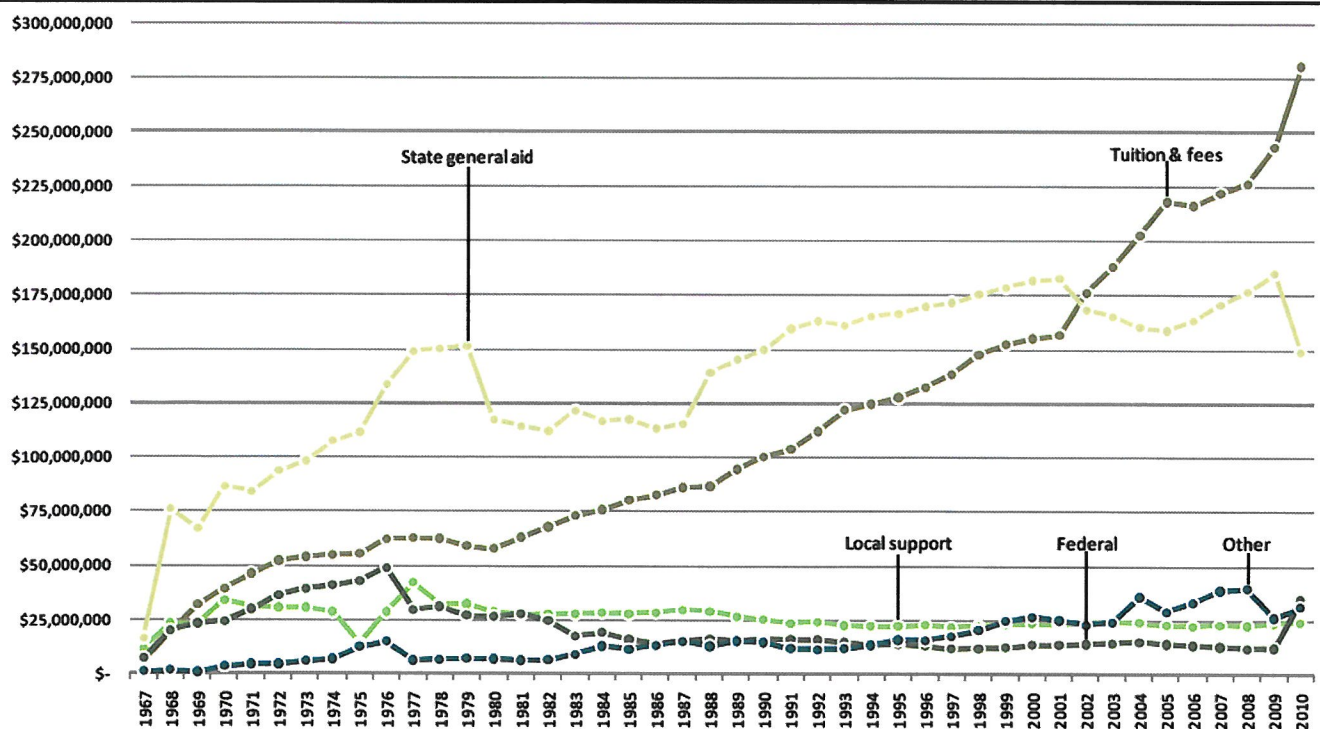
June 6, 2011

Figure 15-2: Revenues by Source: 2010



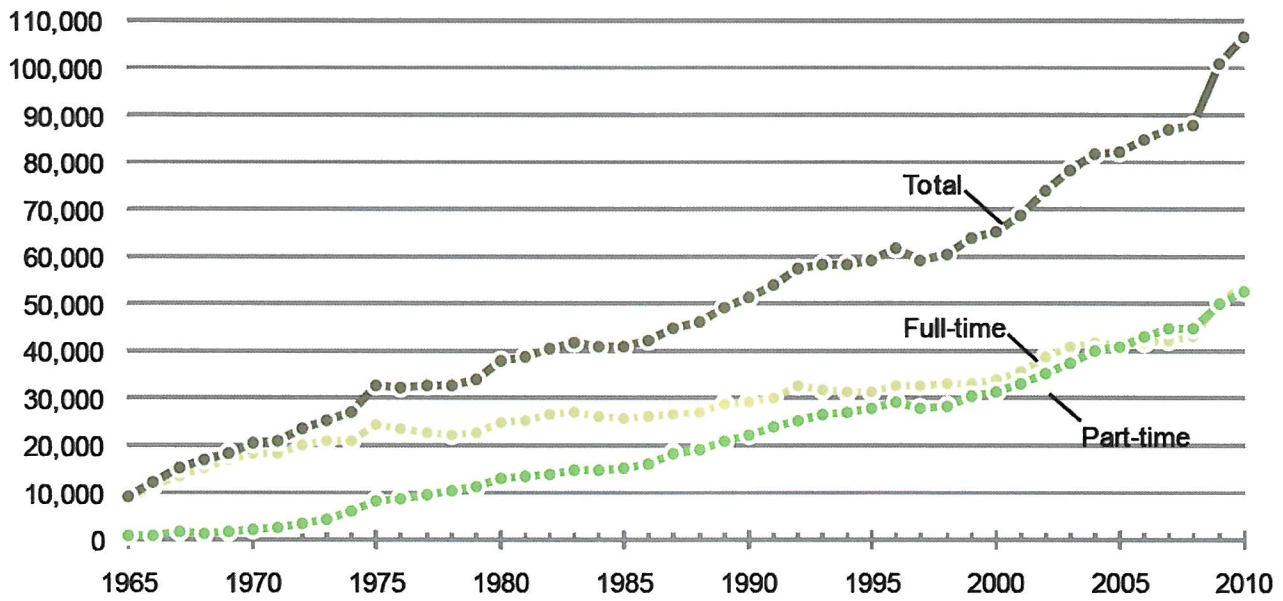
SOURCE: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Community College Services, Annual Report, Unrestricted General Fund AS-15E, Fund 1. See Table 15-5.

Figure 15-1: Adjusted Unrestricted General Fund Revenue by Source: 1967-2010



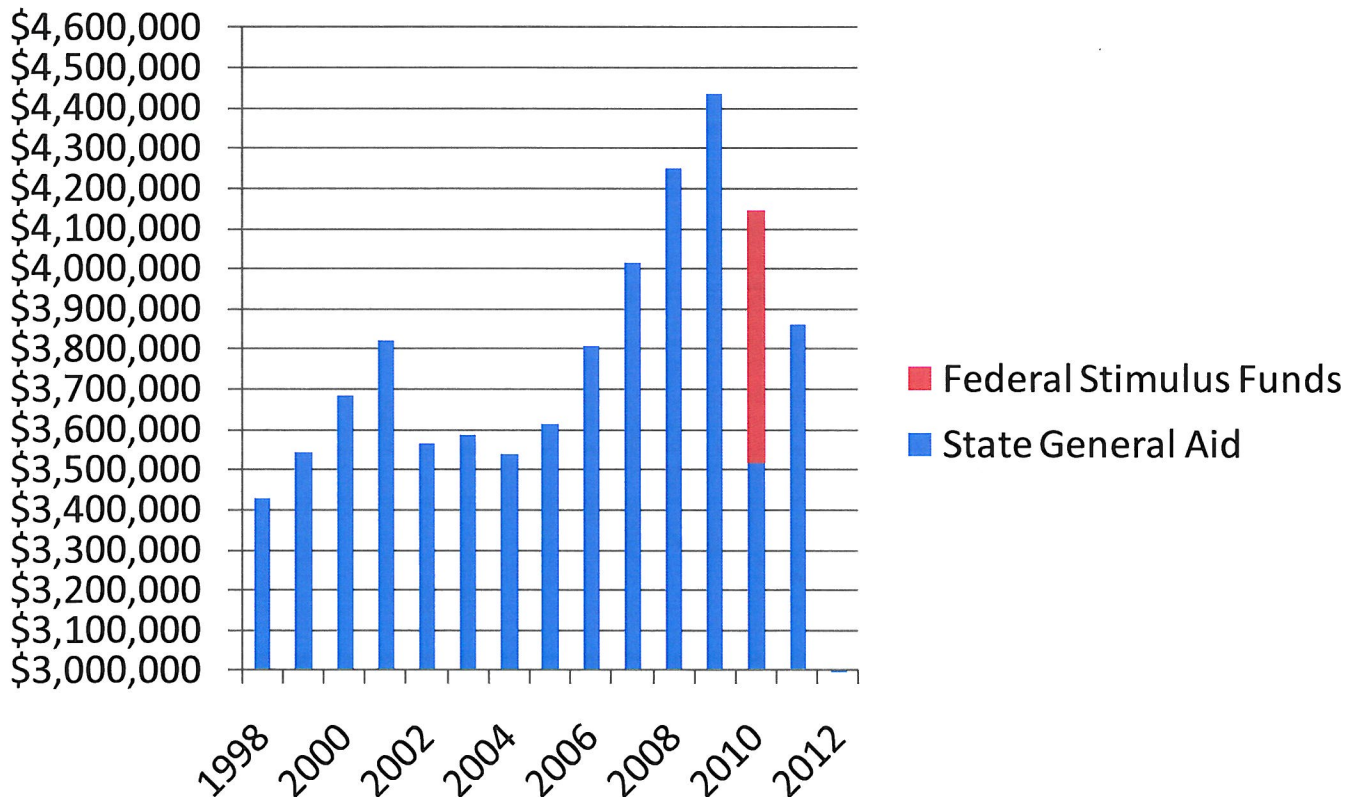
NOTE: Amounts are adjusted for inflation to 2010 amounts based upon July-to-July changes in the CPI-U. SOURCE: Iowa Department of Education, see Table 15-1 through Table 15-5.

Figure 2-1: Fall Enrollment: 1965-2010



SOURCE: Iowa Department of Education, Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation, Fall Enrollment Report: 2010.

Southwestern Community College State General Aid



Iowa Prekindergarten/Kindergarten Task Force
c/o Dr. Carol Alexander Phillips
1934 Stevenson Drive
Ames, Iowa 50010-4321
(515) 232-0595

May 3, 2011

The Honorable Terry Branstad
Governor of Iowa
1007 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Governor Branstad:

In 1986, during the farm crisis, you established the "Iowa Prekindergarten/Kindergarten Task Force" to strengthen existing kindergarten programs and implement appropriate prekindergarten programs. Recommendations from this task force were received by the Iowa State Board of Education and later formed the basis for the "Shared Visions" program you signed into law in 1988 and further expanded in the mid-1990s. Iowa has made significant progress since 1986 in developing high quality preschool programs. In fall of 2010, more than 24,000 preschoolers in Iowa were enrolled in collaborative and comprehensive programs in 325 school districts in Iowa providing a strong foundation for future learning and success.

As members of the original Prekindergarten/Kindergarten Task Force, we are writing you twenty-five years after you first convened our group, to urge continuation of Iowa's successful early learning programs. Please consider the following points as you make decisions that affect Iowa's children and families:

- **Education is the cornerstone for future success or failure.** Early childhood research in the last fifty years has documented an economic return of \$7.00 - \$18.00 for every dollar spent during the early years prior to kindergarten. This research has documented the following benefits to participants as they mature:
 - Fewer grade retentions;
 - Decreased placements in special education;
 - Higher percentage of graduation rates;
 - Less involvement with the criminal justice system;
 - Higher wages as adults with larger tax contributions; and
 - Reduced involvement in welfare.
- **Investment in programs for young children pays long term dividends.** This investment has the potential to reduce the gaps in children's achievement and lower costs to society. Quality programs include experiences in all developmental areas, foster partnerships with family members, and involve connections with resources in the community.

- **Parents rely on Iowa's early childhood system for vital help in giving children a strong start in life.** The changing economy has impacted the structure of family life resulting in a need for a strong early childhood system. Seventy percent of Iowa parents need early child care services to maintain employment and provide for their families, one of the highest percentages in the nation.
- **Teacher certification at the preschool level increases both program quality and student success.** Major gains have been made in recent years in educating Iowa's early childhood work force. We do not want to see this progress reversed.
- **Changes in the early childhood system should be made with broad input, expert advice and a reasonable transition period to avoid major disruption to children and families.** Decision-making should be guided by evidence of best practice and impact upon children, families, and schools. Iowa has implemented quality standards affecting children by creating the Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS) and affecting programs by creating the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS) identifying developmentally appropriate practices.

Just as Iowa faced major challenges during the farm crisis, our state certainly has pressing issues to address today. Continued and expanded investments in young children should not be viewed as a problem to be solved during these difficult economic times, but as an investment which produces future cost savings and improved quality of life for Iowa citizens. **We believe that increased funding of Iowa's early childhood system is critical for the future of our state.**

Sincerely,

Ms. Ruth Bolinger
Creston, Iowa

Mr. Chris Carman
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Dr. Susan Donielson
West Des Moines, Iowa

Ms. Carol Feddern
Marion, Iowa

Dr. Melanie K. Felton
Minden, Iowa

Dr. Judith Finkelstein
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Dr. Joan Herwig
Ames, Iowa

Ms. Beverly McCuddin Heuton
Urbandale, IA

Mr. Bob Himes
Spencer, Iowa

Dr. Wilbur House
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dr. Carol Alexander Phillips
Ames, Iowa

Ms. Joan Turner Clary
Des Moines, Iowa